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National Catholic Theater Conference

PRODUCTION CALENDAR

Vol. I

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The Virgin: To the misguided, to the persecuted,
To those who are in misery or pain,
To those on land who from their path are straying,
To those storm-driven on the trackless main,
To those who are despised, to the sinners,
To those on watch and praying for the light,
God send a vision of Himself resplendent,
A vision of His peace this Holy Night!

(Closing speech, Hereford's translation of Sierra's "Holy Night"
Permission E. P. Dutton, Publishers)

PIE IN THE SKY

The Catholic Theatre Guild of San Francisco introduced on October 28, Emmet Lavery's vital Catholic labor play, "Pie in the Sky."

With the action set on the waterfront of an American city, "Pie in the Sky" is concerned with the involuntary regeneration of a faithless and disillusioned soldier of fortune who hides in a Catholic workers' center during a seamen's strike and who, in spite of himself, is moved to imitate for one fleeting instant their way of life.

First written several years ago, "Pie in the Sky" was revised by Mr. Lavery for the production by the San Francisco Guild.

The run was so successful in San Francisco, that the Guild toured to Oakland and will present the play again at Carmel on December 7.

CLARENCE

The press of Peoria, Illinois, enthusiastically greeted "Clarence," the first offering of that city's Catholic Theatre Guild.

The Booth Tarkington comedy characterizes the problems encountered by an ex-army man in seeking employment, and the situations that arise offer a wealth of humor and drama.

While the play itself was cited as refreshing in mood, the performance was particularly commended as the initial effort of a new group.

Organized early last summer, Peoria's Catholic dramatic group appears slated to enjoy a long success. Having already passed the 500 mark in membership, they expect to number 1,000 members by next season.

CAMP SHOWS, INC.

(By NCCService-grams) Formed at the request of the Army and Navy Departments and backed by the USO, Camp Shows, Inc. is the latest organization assigned to entertain the soldiers and sailors of America.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Father Nagle of our Executive Board warmly recommends two Irish one-act plays: "The Match Maker," published in the One Act Play Magazine, and "The Doctor from Dunmoore" by Thomas Patrick Dillon and Nolan Leary.

"The Doctor from Dunmoore" has been selected by Dodd Mead as one of the ten best short plays of 1941. Copies of the script may be secured from Dramatists Play Service; it calls for one easy set, five women, seven men; royalty - \$5.00

Mr. Dillon is currently appearing in the Broadway production of "My Sister Eileen."

Father Schroeder, also of our Executive Board, has been preparing a list of one-act plays for the Mid-West Drama Festival to be held at Dubuque in the spring. Last year twenty-one high schools competed.

Fred Karem has several plays which have been produced successfully at Louisville, and which he believes would be interesting to other groups. If you would like to write him, his address is 1752 Shady Lane, Louisville, Kentucky. Mr. Karem is director of the Catholic Theatre Guild of Louisville and the Roswitha Dramatic Group.

"Angel Street," the new Broadway thriller, you may want to add to your "to see" list.

The Catholic Film and Radio Guild, whose ultimate aim is "the production of 16mm films dealing with the Catholic background of the several states," is organized with headquarters in the Paden Pelton Building, Los Angeles. They look forward to the establishment of local chapters in other cities.

One film on the California missions has already been completed.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY - CURTAIN GUILD

On November 29 the Loyola University Curtain Guild in Chicago gave a performance of "See My Lawyer" for the benefit of the Midwest Regional Conference to be held in Dubuque at the end of January.

Rev. Edward Carrigan is moderator and Bert Walker director of the Guild.

The group's cooperation with the financial committee for the Regional Conference is just one more sample of the good-will evident throughout our membership.

GRENVILLE VERNON

Another of our speakers at the 1941 Convention has left us. Grenville Vernon, drama critic of the Commonweal since 1934, died suddenly on November 30.

That his passing should be announced in the Special Stage and Screen issue of Commonweal, to which he contributed an important part, makes us more aware of our loss. May we ask your prayers for another friend of Catholic Theatre.

COMMONWEAL - DECEMBER 12

If you have not seen the December 12 issue of Commonweal, especially devoted to the theatre and motion picture you have a treat in store for you. Copies may be secured from Commonweal Publishing Company, 386 - 4th Avenue, New York.

Articles include a discussion of "Producer Problems" by John Golden, an analysis by Grenville Vernon of "The Trouble with the American Stage", and an inquiry by Frederic Sondern, Jr. and C. Nelson Schrader into the psychological aspects of motion pictures. You will enjoy, too, the reviews of books about the theatre to which Mrs. Wyatt and Philip Hartung contribute.

BLACKFRIARS - CIRCLE 7-0236

So many have inquired for it, we are publishing here Blackfriars' new telephone number. Please call us when you come to New York.

FORDHAM OPENS NEW COLLINS THEATRE

A complete renovation has transformed the Collins Theatre into one of the most modern in the country. Two new side stages, new lighting equipment, enlarged lobby are some of the innovation. Seating capacity - 700.

The first play cycle of 1941-42 will formally open the new theatre on December 12 and 13, when two short plays and one musical - all student written - will be produced.

Mr. Victor Barnowsky, formerly director of Lessing Theatre, Berlin, is play director, and Rev. Edward F. Clark, S.J. moderator.

MAXWELL ANDERSON

The widespread attention given Maxwell Anderson's lecture at Rutgers, and particularly the welcome given it in Catholic papers through Father Gillis's column, is heartening to those of us who are devoting our small energies to the cause of better theatre.

When Mr. Anderson says "...the theatre is a religious institution devoted entirely to the exaltation of the spirit of man", and again, "It is an attempt to prove that man has a dignity and a destiny, that his life is worth living, that he is not purely animal and without purpose", he comes close to the reason for the National Catholic Theatre Conference.

It is precisely this exaltation of spirit that brings "Song Out of Sorrow," the current Blackfriar production in New York, to a fine peak in its last act. We are thrilled to be able to apply Mr. Anderson's theory so directly to the production at hand of one of our member groups.

HOLLYWOOD LOOKS UP

Emmet Lavery from California calls to our attention the number of films with religious backgrounds that are on their way: "One Foot in Heaven" at Warner's; "Father Malachy's Miracle" for RKO; a remake of "The White Sister" at Metro; "The Keys of the Kingdom" at Selznick.

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Woodstock, Maryland - W. K. Trivett, S. J., whose creative talent was so evident in Fordham's work in recent years, is preparing a modern production of De Koven's "Robin Hood" with and for the Seminary's philosophers.

Springfield, Illinois - The seasonal drama "Holy Night," will be presented by the Little Theatre Group, Springfield Junior College.

Los Angeles - The Catholic Theatre Guild presents, December 2, Hubert Klyne Headley, pianist, and Eric Feldary, Dramalogist.

San Francisco - An all-Lavery evening will be featured by the Jongleurs, Immaculate Heart College, on December 7th. Scenes from "Brief Music", "Kamiano," and other plays, topped off by a short talk by Mr. Lavery.

Richmond - The Catholic Theatre Guild has scheduled a benefit performance on December 10 for Father Flanagan's Boys' Town. Among their other activities for this month are the Capitol Square program on Christmas Eve and choral singing for invalids at Pine Camp and the City Home.

New Haven - WICC and the Blackfriars have cooperated for the enactment of "The Valiant" in institutions throughout Connecticut, beginning with a production December 11 at the Newington State Veterans' Hospital.

Detroit - Representatives of The Catholic Theatre of Detroit discovered "Thunder Rock" while they were in New York last June, and their production is scheduled for the 11, 12, and 13. Special matinee for children of an original adaptation of "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp."

New York - The Blackfriars' Guild open "Song out of Sorrow," a biographical play on Francis Thompson, December 11 for a week's run. Felix Doherty's play has been revised since a tryout sometime ago in Boston when Robert Speaight played Thompson. Mr. Doherty is a Boston Blackfriar.

Troy - "Shadow and Substance" will be produced by the Blackfriars' Guild on December 11, 12, and 13, as the second production of its season.

NOTES FROM HEADQUARTERS

This month we were honored by a visit from Francis Mc Devitt of NCWC former secretary of the Conference, who has retained his vital interest in Conference affairs.

Dr. William Thomas Walsh, of "Philip II" fame, has written a Passion play called "Shekels." With the script are recommendations for staging which would be of practical help. Write us for more information if you would like to consider its production during Lent. This year a Passion Play will have special meaning for your audience.

ANOTHER SERVICE FOR MEMBERS

Once again Catholic Theatre of Detroit inaugurates what we hope will be a regular branch of our service to members. They have sent us the blue prints of their floor plans and detail construction work for their productions, "Who Ride on White Horses," and "A Slight Case of Murder."

These will be available at the Service Bureau for the use of any member group wishing to consult the plans for future productions.

This exchange between producing units can be of invaluable assistance in reaching those higher standards of production which we have set for ourselves. The Service Bureau will welcome additions to this collection--sketches, blue prints, any material that would help another group in its production.

GREETINGS: NEW MEMBERS

Two of our new members said, "Hello, we're going to the Midwest Regional Conference", and all that the first time they wrote us. These vigorous newcomers are Sister Mary Estelle of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, Burlington, Wisconsin, and St. Catherine's Players, St. Catherine's High School, Racine, Wisconsin.

Ann Zeringue, New Orleans, Louisiana, who confides she is most interested in parish dramatics, has also joined us, as have The Theatre Arts Guild, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Josephinum High School, Chicago.

